



Parent Handbook

School Year: 2021 – 2022



Montessori

Live your life the way you want to
Learn at your own pace
Find the freedom in your heart
Peace is yours in any place

PEACE OF MIND
MONTESSORI
SCHOOL

Nurturing the love of learning

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Peace of Mind Montessori School.

This *Parent Handbook* was developed to provide you with information and policies regarding the programs we offer. If you require further information, please feel free to contact us directly.

Here is what other families say about us:

I recently enrolled my son at the Montessori School on a part time basis. From the first time I toured the centre I was impressed with the dedication of the teaching staff and the care shown to the children. In the relatively short time my son has been at the centre so far I can see that the experience has been a positive one. He has settled in really well and enjoys his mornings. I would be happy to recommend Peace of Mind Montessori to other parents.

Rachel

Our experience with Peace of Mind Montessori has been excellent from day one! The teachers have really engaged with my son and he is always excited to go. This gives me the sense of security that he is in a loving environment. Miss Sara has developed an exceptional Montessori program.

My daughter, Julia, (age 4) has been cared for by the centre from the age of 2 years old. The care that has been provided to my daughter in the daycare has been exceptional. The atmosphere is caring and welcoming, with a structure which is disciplined, organized, and educational. As a parent I feel comfortable leaving my child each day. She is stimulated, active, and happy. Additionally, the meals provided are healthy and nutritious, with a wide variety of ingredients introduced in a child-friendly manner. Physical activity/outdoor playtime is also part of the daily routine. I have noticed a significant change in Julia this past year. The progress that I have seen on several of her skills, such as listening, handwriting, identifying emotions, and expressing herself verbally must be credited to both the individual attention and group work that Peace of Mind Montessori School has provided.

Signed a Happy Parent, Matilda

The Peace of Mind Montessori School has its own unique atmosphere. When I search for the definition of this uniqueness, I realized that it has a lot to do with how children relate to each other. They are friendly, accepting, and most importantly happy. Older kids feel responsible for the little ones; they know each other parents and are eager to assist you at the pick-up time. They freely engage in conversation and tell you about their day.

Children's positive attitude is shaped by the teachers. The Peace of Mind Montessori School team is perfectly balanced. They invite you in the morning with their warmth and politeness. The teachers goof around with the children, but at the same time they model positive behaviour and self-regulation. Staff have unlimited patience for children and parents alike and they approach situations with common sense, which is such a scarce gift nowadays... The teachers not only know your kid, but also understand that parents come from all walks of life...Every day, you see teachers and children being engaged in learning, projects, conversation, play, or simply silliness. The school premises, including the playground, are spacious, free of clutter, and full of interesting toys.

Both my son and I are happy being a part of the School.

The Lagos family

We will be doing some things differently and it is very important that you review our **COVID Policy**, which contains information about the health and safety protocols implemented in order to keep our students and staff safe

Our Program Statement

Our Philosophy

Peace of Mind Montessori School offers high quality childcare services. We provide safe and stimulating environment that nurtures love of learning and joy of self-discovery. Our programming addresses emotional, intellectual, physical, and social needs of each child. It empowers the child to become a self-motivated learner, a creative and critical thinker, a responsible member of the community, and a passionate life-long learner.

Our View of Children

Peace of Mind Montessori School believes that children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. Our view, adopted from the pedagogy developed by Dr. Maria Montessori, recognizes the child as one who is naturally eager for knowledge and capable of initiating learning in a supportive, thoughtfully prepared learning environment. Within such setting, children strive to realize their own potential, solve their own problems, and master their own skills at their own pace. The drive towards competence is fueled by the child's natural curiosity and interests.

Our Goals for Children

Our goals for children, consistent with the Ministry of Education pedagogy and built upon the foundations of belonging, well-being, engagement, and expression, include the following:

- Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world;
- Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and well-being;
- Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses;
- Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways.

The four foundations along with the goals for children correspond with what we believe is one of the most important factors in educating our children – being peaceful. For children to be peaceful, their basic needs must first be met, their self-esteem developed. They must feel valued to be able to have trust and confidence in themselves and in others. They must be aware of their feelings, doubts, fears and insecurities. This can happen only when they know they are loved and accepted.

To support children in achieving their goals, Peace of Mind Montessori School:

Promotes health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children.

Peace of Mind Montessori School takes all measures needed to ensure that the children are provided with a safe environment that fosters healthy development and wellbeing.

We have policies and practices around health and safety in place and these are reviewed by all staff on a regular basis.

All our staff have CPR and First Aid training. Playgrounds and classrooms are inspected daily, and a fire drill is done every month.

The classrooms are equipped with furniture and materials that are appropriate for physical and psychological needs of the children, which promotes their safety and wellbeing.

Cleanliness and good personal hygiene are constantly practised in school in order to minimize the potential spread of germs. Classroom toys and equipment are washed and disinfected on a regular basis.

Peace of Mind Montessori provides nutritious snacks and lunches that meet the recommendations set out in the [Canada's Food Guide](#). Children have access to drinking water throughout a day.

The procedures are in place if a child becomes ill while in class. (please refer to the *Heath Policy; Parent Handbook*, page 10).

All staff familiarize themselves with information concerning any medical conditions, allergies, food restrictions and exceptions, medication requirements, and parental preferences in respect to diet.

Supports positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, and staff.

One of the core values of Peace of Mind Montessori School is a Positive Attitude. We believe that a positive attitude will help children to move forward and have faith that life will bring them happiness. Children, parents and staff are encouraged to communicate openly and in a positive way as we believe that positive interactions within school community promote children high self-esteem, confidence and self-regulation.

As children will say things and act as adults do, exhibiting positive behaviour is essential. All staff promote positive interactions by modeling constructive communication with children, families, and teachers. In addition, staff model appropriate ways to solve problems and resolve conflicts. At the same time, children are guided and supported in contributing their own ideas and solutions to problems that arise.

Staff follows Peace of Mind School Guiding Children policy to promote Positive Interactions and model Appropriate Behavior.

Encourages the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate.

Peace of Mind Montessori School staff encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate.

Positive language is used while interacting with children and their Positive Behaviour and Feelings are acknowledged. Staff model appropriate behaviours and support child to child interactions when conflicts arise.

Staff guide children through transitions between program activities. Thanks to routines and cues children know what to expect, which helps make them feel safe and secure.

Children are supported in developing emotional self-awareness. They are encouraged to describe situations in their own words so that they can learn how to recognize feelings in themselves and others. Teachers help children to find strategies to cope with their emotions and find appropriate ways to express themselves.

Crying children are never ignored. Comfort and nurturing are provided when children are needing help.

Fosters the children's exploration, play and inquiry

Peace of Mind Montessori School recognizes that exploration, play and inquiry are essential in early learning.

We believe that child is naturally eager for knowledge and capable of initiating learning in a supportive, thoughtfully prepared environment.

Our Montessori resource rich classrooms are thoughtfully set up to allow children to learn, discover, explore, test, and question.

Teachers introduce materials and children are free to choose what interests them, again and again, work and discover, and ultimately master ideas. Lessons are given, but the goal is for children to discover the answers by using the “auto-didactic”, or “self-correcting” materials that are found in their Montessori classroom.

We recognize that people are the integral part of the learning environment. Interactions and conversations among children, staff, and parents foster exploration, inquiry, and discovery.

Provides child-initiated and adult-supported experiences

Our Montessori classroom basic principle is to “follow the child” as children learn best when they are engaged and interested in learning experiences. Children’s love of work has an unconscious aim at the construction of personality and is a form creation and self-expression that brings joy.

Our learning environment is carefully prepared by teachers to facilitate child-initiated and staff-supported experiences. Our Montessori classrooms allow the child to explore and choose from broad variety of materials, resources, workstations, and playstations. Teachers provide emotional support and encouragement, they offer guidance and knowledge. They help children reflect on what they know, think, and what they would like to learn and discover.

Staff observe children to understand deeper their interests and address these needs in program planning and implementation.

Plans for and creates positive learning environments and experiences in which each child’s learning and development will be supported.

Peace of Mind Montessori School programming caters to each child’s social, physical, intellectual and spiritual unique developmental needs.

Children with differing abilities who are working with Halton Region Inclusion Services will have individual goals established in conjunction with the parents.

Incorporates indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children.

At Peace of Mind Montessori School children are given the opportunity to participate in both indoor and outdoor play. In addition to active play, children have time to rest and sleep.

The programming and classroom setup facilitates active play, rest, sleep, and quiet time to accommodate children varying needs and parental direction.

A rest period of one hour (minimum) to two hours (maximum) takes place after the children finish their lunch. Quiet activities are offered to children who are not asleep and for those who wake up early to allow the other children to continue to sleep.

EDUCATION IS A NATURAL PROCESS CARRIED OUT BY THE CHILD AND IS NOT ACQUIRED BY LISTENING TO WORDS BUT BY EXPERIENCES IN THE ENVIRONMENT.

Fosters the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children.

Regular and ongoing communication with parents is an important component of the day. Communication may be in person, by phone, e-mail or through communication tool – “Hi Mama”.

We encourage parents to speak to the staff, share information, give feedback about the program, and ask questions. Meetings can be booked if staff are unable to give their full attention, due to supervising the children.

In order to maintain daily communication with parents, we post a daily report for each student on [“Hi Mama”](#) platform. Parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers through this app by posting any questions, concerns or comments.

Parent-teacher conferences are held twice during the school year (in December and June) to discuss students' progress and goals.

Involves local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff.

At Peace of Mind Montessori School, we encourage and support community involvement whenever possible. We are partners with [Quality First](#), [ROCK](#), [Halton Region Inclusion Services](#), [CCMA](#) and we utilize their support for our children, families and staff. Speech therapists, consultants and occupational therapists are some of the professionals involved in our centre. Parents will be directed to resources outside the program if necessary. They will be referred to our community partners such as early year's services, speech therapists, support services, occupational therapists, counsellors, etc.

Supports staff or others who interact with the children at a child care centre in relation to continuous professional learning.

Our team is composed of Montessori teachers, Registered Early Childhood Educators, and Assistants who are not only experienced and professional, but also caring and passionate. Peace of Mind Montessori supports its staff in continuous professional learning. Workshops in additions to in-house training opportunities are available throughout a year. Regular staff meetings provide opportunities for knowledge exchange and discussions about current and relevant topics.

Documents and review the impact of the strategies set out above on the children and their families.

All staff, students and volunteers will familiarize themselves with the Program Statement prior to interacting with children. They will meet on a regular basis to establish a clear understanding of the program statement, reflect on it, and revise the document as needed. Each revision will be documented. Families are encouraged to provide feedback regarding the impact of the strategies on an ongoing basis. Parents' opinions will be discussed among staff and strategies altered, if needed.

The Montessori Approach - The Whole Child Approach

We are no longer educating workers who don't ask questions. In order to prepare today's children for tomorrow's jobs, we must prepare them to be problem solvers who use their intellect to think and be creative.

The primary goal of a Montessori program is to develop the skills necessary to lead a productive, happy, and fulfilling life and help each child reach his or her full potential in all areas of life.

Montessori helps children acquire leadership skills and independence early on in their lives which will help them find success later in life. Montessori children grow up with an understanding of who they are and what they want to do with their lives, along with the skills to accomplish their goals.

They become life-long learners who see themselves as part of the larger community and who make a positive difference. Dr. Maria Montessori envisioned world peace through her new method of education, starting one child at a time. Her mantra was, and remains today, *"peaceful child, peaceful world."*

Core Values

A core value is a commitment understood and shared by members of our school community. At Peace of Mind, we believe in: *"Tolerance & Compassion, Positive Attitude, Generosity, Gratitude and Passion"*.

Tolerance & Compassion

To understand the circumstances and viewpoints of others, acceptance of other's opinions, respect for life and the environment. Learning to live in a diverse society is an essential task of peacemaking.

Positive Attitude

Having positive attitude children will be able to move forward and have faith that life will bring them happiness. Exhibiting positive behaviour is important because children will say things and act as what adults do.

Generosity

Sharing with other children. To be helpful to others. When children are more likely thinking of what they want for themselves, explain to them that it is also important to give to those who are less fortunate. Donate food or clothing to a charity or buy gifts for a family in need. To help them realize that it's not all about taking but giving of themselves also.

Gratitude

To be thankful every day, even for the smallest things, like the beautiful weather or a smile from someone. To be thankful for family and friends, for their food, clothing, and shelter, and for their health. Appreciation for all that they have.

Passion

For life, for the people & things they enjoy. Passion makes children excited about life and encourages them to strive higher and be better people. By showing enthusiasm for even the smallest things. The energy will pass on to the children because they will see how wonderful life is.

Our Team

Peace of Mind Montessori team includes Montessori teachers, Registered Early Childhood Educators, and Assistants.

Our staff have appropriate educational background and experience to give children best care and Montessori education possible. Our teachers are caring, passionate and attentive & responsive to the needs of children and concerns of the parents.

Peace of Mind Montessori School implements a Criminal Reference policy for all staff. In addition, employees hold current certification in First Aid and CPR.

Inclusion Policy

Our school will include and accept all families regardless of race, culture, language, socioeconomic background, beliefs, family composition or ability where space permits. We promote a zero reject policy where no child will be excluded from our care for any reason including but not limited to a development or any type of ability, provided that the school is able to address and support the needs of a child.

Supervision Policy of Volunteers and Students

To ensure children's safety and wellbeing, Peace of Mind Montessori School implements Child Care Supervision Policy for Students and Volunteers:

- No child is supervised by a person under 18 years of age;
- Only employees will have direct unsupervised access to children.
- Volunteers and students will not be counted in the staffing ratios
- As a criminal reference check is required to attend a field trip or assist in a classroom, we recommend completing a check upon registration to avoid long wait periods. When completing the application, submit as a volunteer to allow for a reduced fee. Please provide the original to the centre and a copy will be made to be kept in your child's file.

Behavioral Expectations

In order to provide safe environment where everyone is respected, our staff follows the strategies promoting positive behaviour and interactions.

It is the intent of Peace of Mind Montessori School to include all children in our school. Should concerns have been raised that a child's needs are not being met and/or other children are at risk, the school Supervisor, child's teacher, the child and his/ her parents will work together to address these concerns.

However, if a child's behaviour interferes with the well-being, development and security of the other children and staff, the parents will be asked to withdraw their child from the school. Prior to this, the parents will be kept informed of the child's behaviour and progress.

Conduct

Peace of Mind Montessori School maintains standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party. If at any point a parent/guardian or staff member feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused, intimidated or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the Supervisor and/or Owner, who will address the situation further.

Prohibited Practices

To ensure that at Peace of Mind Montessori School is an enjoyable and safe environment, behaviour that puts others or self at risk are not permitted. The following practices are prohibited at our school: violence; swearing; corporal punishment of a child (physically striking a child); deliberate harsh or degrading measures used on a child that would humiliate or undermine a child's self-respect; deprivation of a child's basic needs including food, shelter, clothing or bedding; locking a child in the centre or a room for the purpose of confining a child; physical restraint as a form of punishment.

Smoking is prohibited on the premises, including the playground and the parking lot.

Babysitting Policy

Staff are not permitted to provide babysitting services to families enrolled in school. The staff at Peace of Mind Montessori School are qualified and trained employees. The profession is struggling to achieve broader recognition and support, and employing trained staff as babysitters undermines the efforts that are being made to increase the professionalism of our field.

Serious Occurrences

Peace of Mind Montessori follows emergency management policies and procedures such as Emergency Evacuation Procedure and Fire Safety procedure.

The school complies with all legislation regarding the reporting of serious occurrences including emergencies and fire.

In order to keep parents informed of reported serious occurrences, the following process for posting the Serious Occurrence Notification Form is implemented:

- Following submission of the Serious Occurrence Initial Notification Report (INR) to the ministry and within 24 hours of becoming aware of an occurrence or when the Operator/Supervisor deems the occurrence to be serious, the Operator/Supervisor will complete a Serious Occurrence Notification Form to communicate information to parents about serious occurrences that have occurred in the child care centre, while respecting the privacy of the individual(s) involved.
- The Serious Occurrence Notification Form will be posted next to the Child Care License and Licensing Summary Chart at the entrance of the centre for 10 business days.

For a more detailed description of our Serious Occurrence Notification Form policy, please see the Supervisor in the office and a copy will be provided to you.

Evacuation Procedure

The school runs fire drills on a monthly basis, so that all children practise the evacuation procedure. In the event of a real evacuation of the building, our emergency shelter is at St. Simon's Anglican Church, located at 1450 Litchfield Road (Trafalgar Rd, South of Upper Middle). Our emergency binders will be with us and each parent would be called to pick up their child, immediately after the proper emergency authorities have been contacted.

Parents' Concerns Guidelines

We recognize that good communication within the school community is of the utmost importance. Peace of Mind Montessori School staff will share openly about any concerns or questions that may arise. Similarly, if parents have any concerns, we would like parents to share them with us. The Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedures below provides a process for parents/guardians, the child care licensee and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues and concerns:

Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedures

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, child care providers and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by Peace of Mind Montessori School Staff and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Issues and concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within 1-2 business days. The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the [local Children's Aid Society](#) (CAS) directly.

Halton Children's Aid Society

1445 Norjohn Court, Burlington, ON L7L 0E6

Bus: 905-333-4441 | Toll free: 866-607-5437 | Fax: 905-333-1844

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

More information can be found at Government of Ontario website at

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaidthereportingabuse/index.aspx>

Procedures

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
<p>Program Room-Related</p> <p>E.g: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the classroom staff directly <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Supervisor or the Owner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 1-2 business days. <p>Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the date and time the issue/concern was received; - the name of the person who received the issue/concern; - the name of the person reporting the issue/concern; - the details of the issue/concern; and - any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.
<p>General, Centre- or Operations-Related</p> <p>E.g: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Office Administrator <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Supervisor or the Owner 	<p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p> <p>Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 1-2 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.</p>
<p>Staff-, Duty parent-, Supervisor-, and/or Licensee-Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the individual directly <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Supervisor or the Owner <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, duty parents, etc. that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the Supervisor or the Owner as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>
<p>Student- / Volunteer-Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Supervisor or the Owner. <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor or the Owner as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	

Escalation of Issues or Concerns

Child care should be an enriching and satisfying experience for your child. You should always feel confident that your child is in a healthy, safe and happy environment.

Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to the Owner.

Issues and concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the *Child Care and Early Years Act., 2014* and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be reported to the Ministry of Education's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch.

Ministry of Education

Licensed Child Care Help Desk

1-877-510-5333 or childcare_ontario@ontario.ca

Issues and concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g. local public health department, police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, fire department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers etc.) where appropriate.

Immunization Records

The centre is required to keep a record of the immunization administered to each child. We require a signed health form from the parent noting the date and type of immunization before the child will be admitted to the centre. It is very important that parents keep immunization records up-to-date.

For new students, parents must:

1. Report the student's immunization record to the Halton Region Health Department in one of the following ways:
 - Online at halton.ca
 - Use the OneHalton app
 - Call 311
 - Mail or deliver in-person at 1151 Bronte Road, Oakville L6M 3L1 to Immunization Services.
2. Submit a copy of the updated record to the child care centre.

Medication

If a child requires medicine, a medication form must be filled out by the parent/guardian to enable a staff member to administer medication to the child. Medication must be given directly to a staff member and **must not be left anywhere else** (i.e. cubbie basket, backpack). Medicine must be in its original bottle or container; prescribed medication must have clearly visible label and must bear the doctor's name, child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage instructions as well as the date of purchase.

There are two medicine storage containers at the centre: 1) a locked box is located inside the refrigerator for refrigerated medicine, 2) a locked box is located on top of the refrigerator for non-perishable medicines. EpiPens are kept in the classrooms backpacks as they need to be readily accessible at all times.

Diapering & Toilet Training

The school will assist in toilet training your child when staff and parents have mutually agreed that the child is physically and emotionally ready to learn the task. Parents are expected to provide their child's own supply of disposable diapers, wipes, and any necessary creams. Several changes of clothing will be expected each day, in case of toileting accidents.

Nutrition

Our centre offers hot lunches, and 2 snacks daily. Our menu plan is nutritious and meets the recommendations set out in the Health Canada Document [Canada's Food Guide](#). Our weekly menus are posted on the Parent Information bulletin board in the front hallway, and parents may refer to these at any time. Children are encouraged, but not forced, to try everything that is served at each meal.

Breakfast is offered to children who wish to eat this meal at school, and is available during morning arrival. Our main meal for the children is their lunch, which is served family style: the teacher remains at the table, presents the food in serving dishes, and aids the children in self-service (age- dependant). A snack is offered to the children mid-way through the afternoon programme.

All information regarding food restrictions for your child must be included in the registration form when you initially apply for the program. This information will be posted in each room and in the kitchen. The school can accommodate food allergies, with written documentation from the parents. Please bear in mind, that except for documented medical or religious reasons, food exceptions for individual children are difficult to accommodate. We are a nut-free centre, therefore, we ask for your cooperation that food is not brought into the building. The school follows "No Outside Food" policy.

Food/Allergies

Peace of Mind Montessori School is a "Nut Free environment." No outside food is allowed to enter the centre. A medical note stating all food allergies must be on file for all children. Teachers must be made aware of any food allergies your child has before starting the program.

Sun Safety

The Ministry of Education requires a signed authorisation form from parents for staff to apply sunscreen. The school is committed to the health and wellbeing of your child. To ensure your child is able to participate in all aspects of our outdoor programme, we ask parents to supply the sunscreen (as children may be sensitive to some sunscreens), sign the authorisation form, and submit it to the office.

Playground Safety

Our school does a daily inspection of the playground (checking for hazardous debris, vandalism damage, etc.), a monthly inspection (checking for equipment damage, etc.), and an annual comprehensive inspection and written report. Surfacing is maintained to provide acceptable shock-absorbing performance and is regularly raked, lifted and re-distributed on an ongoing basis. All inspections are recorded.

Arrival and Departure

Children must be accompanied by an adult and that adult should ensure that the child is under the supervision of a teacher before leaving. Similarly, parents are expected to be present at the premises when returning for their child. No child will be sent home with anyone other than a parent or guardian, unless the school has received written authorization. Anyone picking up your child must be 18 years or older. The child care staff have the right to ask for identification from anyone (including parents) who arrives to pick up a child.

If your child will not be attending the school for any reason, please phone or email the school as early as possible to inform the staff not to expect your child. Also, we ask that parents inform our school office if there is going to be a change in the normal drop off and pick up routine for your child (i.e. early pick up for a medical appointment).

Rest Time

A rest period of one hour (minimum) to two hours (maximum) takes place after the children finish their lunch. Each child has his/her own cot (labelled with their name) covered by a sheet supplied by the centre. All cot sheets are washed weekly, cots are disinfected regularly, and we encourage you to take your child's blanket

home for laundering on Fridays. Quiet activities are offered to children who are not asleep, and for those who wake up early to allow the other children to continue to sleep.

Clothing & Possessions

Children should be dressed in casual, comfortable, and washable clothing that allows them to play freely. Each child should have at least one extra change of clothing stored in his/her cubbie at all times. All clothing should be clearly labelled with the child's name, including hats, shoes, underwear, boots and mittens.

Peace of Mind Montessori School is not responsible for any loss or damage to personal items or toys that are brought from home; and we ask that all your child's belongings are labelled clearly, so that they can be returned to their rightful owner.

Age group

The centre is licensed to provide child care services for 58 children

<u>Group</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Teacher / Child Ratio</u>	<u>Class Size</u>
Toddlers	15 months – 2.5 years	1:5	10
Montessori	2.5 – 6 years	1:8	24 (x2 rooms)

Registration Process

Parents will receive an admission package including Peace of Mind Montessori School Policies and Procedures and enrollment contract. All forms must be returned before child's first day in the program. Please ensure that all information is completed, including payment authorization, immunization record, and an emergency contact person. It is school's policy that both parents sign the *Policies and Procedures Sign-off* form and *Enrolment Contract*. If this is not possible, please discuss it with the Supervisor.

Telephone and Address Changes

It is for your child's benefit that you notify the office immediately if your contact information changes. Information in your child's file is checked annually, however any changes should be reported to us as soon as possible so that we can contact you at any time.

Admission and Withdrawal

The school is very flexible with the integration process of your child. On the first day a child attends the school parents are encouraged to stay for a short period of time (**not feasible during COVID-19 pandemic**). As the staff helps the child with the transition, we suggest that parents leave with a simple "Good-bye" and a promise to see a child soon. We also suggest that parents try to pick up their child early for the first few days. Parents should feel free to call during the day to see how their child is doing.

Withdrawal notification must be given to the Supervisor in writing 4 weeks before child's last day in care. If proper notice is not received, the parent will be required to pay monthly tuition fee.

Days & Hours of Operation

Peace of Mind Montessori School operates year-round (excluding statutory holidays), Monday through Friday.

We observe the following Statutory Holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Family Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Simcoe Day
- Labour Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day

If a Statutory Holiday falls on a weekend, the centre will be closed either the preceding working day, or the next working day. Regular fees apply regardless of the above closure dates.

In 2021-2022 school year, the centre will be closed for:

- Winter Holiday Break, from **December 27, 2021 to January 3, 2022**. The program will resume on Tuesday, January 4th.
- March Break from **March 14'22 to March 18'22**.

There will be no programming for children on **December 10, 2021** and **June 15, 2022** as on these days Parent-Teacher Conferences and Professional Development activities for staff will be carried out.

If, for any reason, the daycare should have to close during the day or is unable to open due to unforeseen circumstances, regular fees will still apply.

Field Trips - due to COVID-19 cancelled until further notice

During the school year, we arrange planned field trips, which are educational and related to the program. A walk to a nearby park or through the neighbourhood is thoroughly enjoyed by the children.

For off-site field trips, parents are required to sign a permission form to allow their child to take part in the trip and pay the necessary fees in advance. If you do not wish your child to attend the field trip, you are required to find alternate care for the day. We welcome parents who wish to volunteer, as additional supervision, for these trips. Additional supervision is always needed.

All parent volunteers must provide the Administration with a current Police Security Clearance and review all the safety policies prior to commencing.

Special Events – due to COVID-19 cancelled until further notice

The centre organizes a variety of special events throughout the year. These either provide specific services or social occasions designed to allow families the opportunity to interact together. Individual photographs of each child, plus photographs of the child's group and teachers, are taken in early October to be available before Christmas. Social occasions include a Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day celebrations, a summer family barbeque and a December Holiday concert.

Inclement weather

Safety and wellbeing of children is our utmost concern. If due to the weather conditions you deem road conditions unsafe, please feel free to keep your child at home or pick him/her up early rather than take unnecessary risks. In the event of inclement weather, we will follow the Halton District School Board system regarding school closing. Please refer to the [Halton District School Board website https](https://www.halton.ca/education/school-closures) for closure announcements. School staff will notify parents via email about the centre closure as soon as possible. Please note that Regular daily fees will apply.

Fees

Peace of Mind Montessori School reviews fees annually. These fees are subject to change generally on the first day of September each year. Parents will receive a 30-day notice if any “fee change” is in effect.

Fee Schedule School Year: 2021-2022	
<u>Toddler program:</u>	
Age:	15 months to 2.5 years
Schedule:	8:00 am to 6:00 pm
Monthly Fee:	\$1,580
<u>CASA program:</u>	
Age:	2.5 years to 6 years
Schedule:	7:30 am to 4:30 pm
Monthly Fee:	\$1,490
<u>CASA aftercare program (optional):</u>	
Schedule:	4:30 pm to 6:00 pm
Monthly Fee:	\$150
Fees are payable monthly through pre-authorized debit.	
Rates are subject to change.	
Family discount of 10% off the older sibling rate.	

Fees are paid monthly on the first day of the month. You will be asked to fill out a pre-authorization debit form when you register your child. Please note that you are responsible to pay school fees on statutory holidays, Winter Holiday Break, March Break, Parent-Teacher Conferences, illness of your child, and emergency closure.

Fee Policies

Payment of Fees

Fees will be paid through pre-authorized payment on the first day of the month. If there are insufficient funds in a member's account to cover the fees, the parent will be charged \$5.00. If payments of fees are 2 weeks overdue and alternate arrangements with the Supervisor have not been made, program will be suspended until payment is made in full. If suspension occurs and payment or arrangements with the Supervisor of Peace of Mind Montessori School are made, your child care space will be reassigned.

Vacation Policy

If your child is away on vacation, credits/refunds are not possible. Staff are in attendance daily whether or not your child is here. We ask that you please notify your child's teacher in advance of any planned holidays.

Waiting list policy

PURPOSE: Peace of Mind Montessori School aims to develop a waiting list policy and practices that are transparent, fair and consistent.

- Peace of Mind Montessori School develops and maintains a Waiting List Registry.
- To gain access to the Waiting List Registry, families must complete Waiting List Request Form to provide required information including parents/guardians first and last names; contact information; the date parents would like child care to begin; child's name and date of birth. Applicants will be assigned a Waiting List Registry Number and added to the Registry List **in the order in which the requests were received**. Completed Waiting List Registration Form will be kept in a secure location in the school office.
- No fee is charged to have a child added to the waiting list. **Once the availability is confirmed, the deposit in the amount of monthly tuition payment is required in order to secure a spot. The deposit will be applied to the last tuition payment.**
- Applicants will be offered space in the program on a first-come, first-served basis however priority will be granted to:
 1. Siblings of children currently enrolled.
 2. Children of current Peace of Mind Montessori School employees.
 3. Returning families.

In addition to the priority system, children currently enrolled in TODDLER ROOM receive priority over new enrollees for openings in CASA ROOM.

- When a space becomes available, the family at the top of the waiting list will be contacted.
- There is no specified length of time that child need to be on the list to be offered a space. Spaces are created when a family or child leaves the centre. Because of the priority system, an applicant's place on the waiting list may be moved down.
- Applicants who require a space ahead of time, can request to add their child/children the Waiting List Registry for future enrollment. However, the space will not be blocked for the applicant as new enrollees will be accepted until the full capacity of the centre is reached. The staff will inform the applicants if all seats are taken before the desired start date.

Tax receipt

Child Care fees are tax deductible. By February, a receipt will be available to each family for income tax purposes.



Peace of Mind Montessori School

Tolerance & Compassion



Positive Attitude

Generosity

Gratitude & Passion